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How to submit a book for *State of the Arts*

To submit a book by a Montana author for inclusion in *State of the Arts*' "About Books" section:

Please send a copy of the book to *Lively Times*, 33651 Eagle Pass Trl., Charlo, MT 59824; or submit the following information electronically to writesus@livelytimes.com or mac@mt.gov:

- Title, author, publisher, publisher's address and month/year published;
- Price and whether it's hard- or softcover;
- A brief description of the book (no more than 200 words), and a short bio of the author;
- A cover image: minimum 200 dpi in pdf, jpg or tiff file;
- If other publications or authors have reviewed the book, send a brief sampling of those remarks.

If you would like us to return the book, include a note with it saying so. (We will pay for shipping.)

E-books: We'll also mention books that are only electronically published: send title, author, a cover image, website for downloads, and a brief paragraph about the book.

Books submitted to *State of the Arts* appear in this publication at the Montana Arts Council's discretion and as space permits, and will not necessarily be reprinted in *Lively Times*.

ABOUT BOOKS

Inaccessible

By Richard Layne

Published October 2013 by

Sweetgrass Books, Helena, MT

\$19.95 softcover; \$27.95 hardcover

Philippe Petit, who trod a tightrope between the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in 1974, later told reporters, "you have to be obsessed, passionate ..." Those adjectives also describe Helena mountaineer Richard Layne, whose book, *Inaccessible*, chronicles four solo winter treks he took into Glacier Park's back country, each offering "a hundred ways to die."

His determination to scale Hole in the Wall, a remote cirque in the northwestern corner of the park, goes beyond a thirst for adventure. The notch – a challenging hike in summer – is guarded in winter by sheer cliffs and avalanche chutes. Yet Layne sees accessing it as key to his ultimate goal of tracing Montana's 990-mile portion of the Continental Divide in winter.

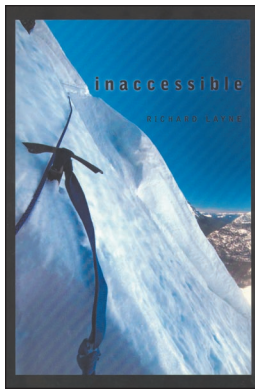
The 59 year old, with "old age nipping at me," staggers under a 90-pound backpack (that weighed even more on his final 16-day journey) and is plagued by exhaustion, sciatica, reluctant knee joints and hands numb from carpal tunnel syndrome. Meanwhile, the winter of 2010-11 hurls violent snowstorms and sub-zero temperatures at the park.

Still he trudges on, making three separate reconnaissance trips before his final effort in May 2011 to assail the Hole in the Wall, approaching it from Bowman Lake. On one interminable day, he lands upside-down on an 80-degree slope with a nearly broken leg, and survives a falling pile of debris and a thunderous avalanche that lands just 20 feet from his tent.

Layne spent an impoverished childhood in the Bitterroot Valley before spending three years with the Army in Vietnam, and 15 years as an alcoholic. "If the challenge before me was at all about this particular place, it was even more about a lifetime of rising to challenges, a lifetime of defying the odds as others saw them," he writes.

His book is dappled with stunning photos of Glacier's backcountry in winter – scenes rarely, if ever witnessed by the park's more conventional visitors.

When he's not plotting his next adventure – a nearly 1,000-mile winter trek along the Continental Divide – Layne resides in Helena with his wife, Carleen, the accountant for the Montana Arts Council.



– Kristi Niemeyer

A Taste of Montana, Favorite

Recipes from Big Sky Country

By Seabring Davis, photography

by Paulette Phlipot

Published 2013 by Farcountry Press, Helena, MT

\$29.95 hardcover

To assemble the recipes for her book, food-lover and veteran journalist Seabring Davis traversed the state, visiting restaurants, guest ranches, resorts and bed-and-breakfasts. She gathered over 100 favorite recipes from 58 chefs, stretching from hearty breakfast fare to elegant desserts.

Davis personally tested the recipes in her own Livingston kitchen, using fresh, locally grown ingredients whenever possible. Her book highlights restaurants that incorporate local ingredients into their menus, and profiles a handful of Montana food producers.

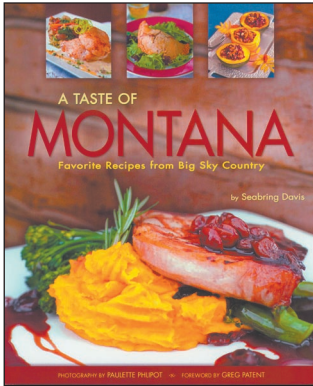
The variety of eating establishments represented in the book is quite remarkable. Start your day with a slice of Oatmeal Pie, recipe courtesy of Yesterday's Calf-A in Dell. If wild game is appealing, try the Elk Sausage Scramble, cooked up at the Rising Sun Motor Inn and Cabins in East Glacier.

For a casual dinner menu, whip up Holland Lake Lodge's Deconstructed Chicken Pot Pie. Kick off a dinner party with a huckleberry martini, courtesy of the Carabiner Lounge at Big Sky Resort, then finish your feast with another signature Montana ingredient, Davis's own Rustic Flathead Cherry Tart.

If it's true that we "eat with our eyes," readers will be pleasantly satiated by Phlipot's photographs, which lavishly illustrate the book.

In addition, *A Taste of Montana* offers helpful tips for cooking at high altitudes and equipping your kitchen for efficiency, an index for regional food producers, stores and organizations, and a list of contributing chefs and their dining establishments.

The author is the editor-in-chief of *Big Sky Journal* and *Western Art and Architecture* magazines and has written several lifestyle books. Phlipot is an award-winning food, travel and lifestyle photographer who lives in Sun Valley, ID.



– Judy Shafter

Savor Sweet Christmas

By Ann Cogswell

Published 2013 by Farcountry Press, Helena

\$17.95 softcover

"Savor sweet Christmas/ with jam and warm bread/ with figs and bright cherries/ all candied and red," writes Ann Cogswell in her new collection of Christmas poetry.

As a voice, piano and music teacher, Cogswell's love of poetry grew out of her love for musical notes and rhythm.

"Music is my first passion," said

Cogswell. "I started piano lessons when I was 5 years old. The teacher came to our home in Conrad, and I had a silver dollar stuck in my fist to pay her.

"And I loved, and still love words. Many words are like musical notes, and



I say them over and over and over, just because they are like little drops of tone."

Savor Sweet Christmas is the result of over 20 years of writing Christmas poems. As Cogswell shopped for Christmas presents, she realized there were no books of Christmas poetry by a single author in the bookstores.

"So I decided the time is now," she says of her decision to publish her first book of Christmas poems.

Each of the 31 poems in the book is completely original, offering Cogswell's own thoughts on themes of the season, from trees to teapots, and from mangers to Santa Claus. She also photographed the images that accompany the poems.

With *Savor Sweet Christmas*, we can relish all aspects of the holiday season, "with winter-white roses,/ with church-bells and sleigh bells/ and frosted pink noses./ Hold fast to Christmas –/ its lifespan is brief./ and withers so soon/ like/ a dry/ autumn leaf."

Cogswell holds degrees in music education and music history from The University of Montana, and maintains a private studio in Great Falls where she teaches voice, piano and music theory. A former member of the Montana Arts Council, she has always been an avid reader and reads and writes poetry as well as articles on the role of the arts in society.

Montana Territory and the Civil War

War, A Frontier Forged on the Battlefield

By Ken Robison

Published October 2013 by The History Press, Charleston, SC

\$19.99 softcover

A century and a half after the Civil War, Great Falls author and historian Ken Robison poses the question, "How did the Civil War affect Montana?" His new book travels back in time to find answers.

It's a must read for anyone interested in the Civil War, Manifest Destiny, the Indian Wars or the gold rushes that brought thousands of miners to Montana Territory.

Robison chronicles how Yankees, Rebels, former slaves and slaveholders all sought riches, adventure and freedom in the untamed West. The newcomers often lived side by side, leaving their imprint on Montana's communities.

Any student of the state's history will recognize the names that populate this book, from Union Colonel Sidney Edgerton to General Thomas Francis Meagher, and from abolitionist James M. Ashley to Colonel Wilbur Fisk Sanders. Robison also profiles combat veterans "who show the many sides of war and peace," and recaps the Indian Wars that were fought by veterans of the Civil War.

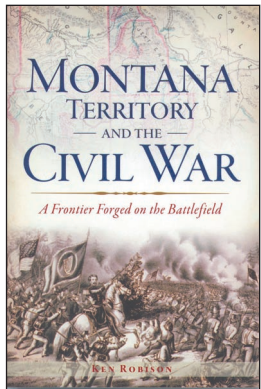
Black Americans made their mark on Montana too, including private Alexander Branson, who became a prosperous merchant in Lewistown, and former slave Charles Meek, who served with Gen. Ulysses Grant before landing in Great Falls, where he became a juror and political delegate.

He also describes several courageous women, who taught freed slaves, spied for the Union and served as combat nurses.

These hardy folks brought leadership, determination and courage, forged from the tragic events of the Civil War, to lay the foundation on which Montana stands today.

Robison is a historian at the Overholser Historical Research Center in Fort Benton and for the Great Falls/Cascade County Historic Preservation Commission. Previous titles include *Life and Death on the Upper Missouri: The Frontier Sketches of Johnny Healy*, *Cascade County and Great Falls*, and *Fort Benton*.

– Tim Fox



Main Street: A Snapshot of Downtown Montana

By Roy Jacobson

Published 2013 by Montana Photo Art, Kalispell, MT

\$125 hardcover

Roy Jacobson, photographer and author of *Barberia: Barber Shops of the Borderlands*, spent six years photographing all the towns in Montana, from Westby in the northeast to Darby in the southwest – and every community in-between.

He chronicles that effort in a new photographic essay, *Main Street: A Snapshot of Downtown Montana*.

This 186-page journey, filmed in black and white and color, portrays the ever-changing, and oft forgotten landscapes that make up the main streets of this large and largely rural state. World-renowned photographer and filmmaker Kurt Markus wrote the foreword.

The book features 82 towns, and explores the history and name-origins of many. It also includes several landscapes, a few cowboy and rodeo images, as well as an occasional portrait.

Of the many towns he explored, Jacobson lists a few favorites: Bannack for its primitive beauty, rustic architecture and historical significance as Montana's first capitol; Fort Benton, on the banks of the Missouri River, for its contemplative serenity; and the tiny communities of Ingomar, Virgille, Whitewater and Loring, for their subtle beauty and relationship to the vast prairie landscape that envelops them.

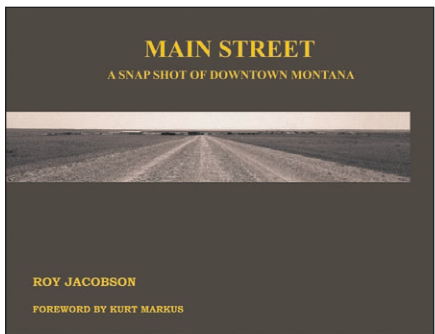
While many books and magazines focus on the majestic panoramas of Montana, the author set out to reveal the beauty of its towns and cities, and to examine "the imprint we have left on this land."

"I hope these photographs will also bring back meaningful and colorful memories for those who grew up in these towns," he says.

Jacobson is a native of Wisconsin, and began using 35mm cameras while working for the National Park Service – a career that took him to many parts of the United States and Mexico. He now works as a freelance photographer who lives in Kalispell, but divides his time between Montana, Arizona and Mexico.

For more information, visit www.montanaphotoart.com.

– Kristi Niemeyer



ABOUT BOOKS

Light of the World

By James Lee Burke
Published 2013 by Simon and Schuster,
New York, NY
\$27.99 hardcover

Even though it takes place on Montanans' home turf, don't expect to be comforted by James Lee Burke's latest novel, an unnerving contemplation of evil. Sure, violence and creepy criminals are part and parcel of Burke's oeuvre, but *Light of the World* knifes deeper.

Detective Dave Robicheaux and sidekick Clete Purcel are far from their beloved Louisiana, vacationing on a ranch in the Bitterroot Valley with their families. But paradise vanishes abruptly after an arrow skims past his daughter's head, a local Indian girl disappears, and Clete's daughter (a former assassin-for-hire) is abducted and tortured by a ruthless cop.

Asa Surette, a convicted serial killer from Kansas, appears to be haunting the neighborhood and takes a personal interest in Dave's daughter, a lawyer and novelist who once interviewed him. Surette, convicted to life in prison for eight grisly murders, including children, embodies for Robicheaux "a level of evil far greater in dimension and cunning than the machinations of one individual ... The evil they do is of a kind we never erase from memory."

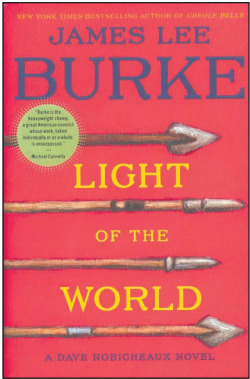
Toss in a born-again rodeo cowboy who speaks in tongues, an oil baron and his corrupt son, an eccentric English professor and a seductive New Orleans belle and you have another compulsive page-turner, drawn against the familiar skyline of western Montana.

"All the worries and concerns that plague us on a daily basis seem to dissolve and disappear, like smoke, inside this sun-spangled canyon deep in the heart of Blackfoot country," notes the detective while casting flies into the fabled river. But murder rises again and again in a novel that's unsettling, even in the clear light of day.

Kirkus Reviews praises Burke's 32nd novel as "his most sharply focused, and perhaps his most harrowing, study of human evil, refracted through the conventions of the crime novel."

The author, who resides in Missoula, was named a Grand Master by the Mystery Writers of America, has received two Edgar awards for Best Crime Novel of the Year, and was lauded by the *Denver Post* as "America's best novelist."

— Kristi Niemeyer



Montana

By Gwen Florio
Published 2013 by The Permanent Press,
Sag Harbor, NY
\$28 hardcover

Missoula journalist Gwen Florio turns her pen to fiction for this debut novel, which introduces readers to Lola Wicks, an investigative reporter and war correspondent recently recalled to the U.S., where her job has been downsized to a domestic suburban beat.

"It's not personal," her editor tells her, and wisely recommends that Lola take some accrued vacation to soften the hard edges obtained from years of reporting in war-torn Afghanistan.

Lola heads to the miniature town of Magpie, Montana, a stone's throw from the Canadian border, to visit her best friend and former colleague, Mary Alice, now a reporter for the local newspaper.

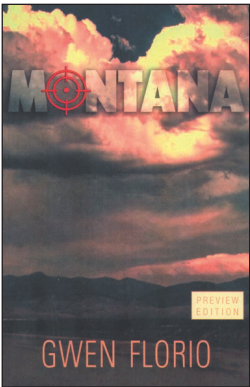
She finds her friend shot dead outside her small cabin in the woods with only her dog and horse as mute witnesses to the crime. After learning that she is a suspect and sizing up the local sheriff as marginally competent, Lola decides to take on the investigation herself.

Lola suspects that her friend's investigative reporting was the motive for the crime. With the savvy of a reporter and the resourcefulness of a person who has fibbed her way through checkpoints in combat zones, she begins to collect information, storing details on her mental flash drive to ultimately reveal the killer.

Florio sets the tone for a riveting mystery with deft descriptions of her characters, who live against a backdrop of poverty and despair. The final stand-off between Lola and the killer is a literal cliff hanger, calling into play every resourceful fiber of her being. "An action-packed story with plenty of danger and bloodshed," writes the *Denver Post*.

Florio has covered stories ranging from the Oklahoma City bombing to the Miss America pageant, and has reported from Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. Her journalism has twice been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and her short fiction for the Pushcart Prize. A sequel to *Montana* is due out in March.

— Judy Shafter

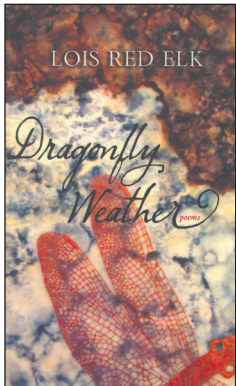


Dragonfly Weather

By Lois Red Elk
Published 2013 by Lost Horse Press,
Sandpoint, ID
\$18 softcover

"Something sacred comes this way," writes poet Lois Red Elk. It announces itself in the flutter of dragonfly wings, searching for fresh mint along Tule Creek, making a doll of doeskin, quillwork and horsehair. It shows up while skinning a deer and admiring "the placement of tendons/ on the deer shoulders, no joints, just the crisscrossing/ of muscle."

Dragonfly Weather takes us into a world of reverence for seen and unseen beings, for ancestors, children and generations still to come. A grandmother thanks water, "the millions of ion-laced rain drops" that grace her garden; an unborn child is welcomed to the world by a drumbeat, "the tempo laid down/ in lines and spaces onto/ a womb of parchment and sinew ..."



In Red Elk's world, dreams have portent: "In my early waking hours, I see you, Cousin, putting on/ special traveling moccasins, the kind with four blue wings/ extending from the flutter of your feet ..." And she heeds Dragonfly, "one of the oldest storytellers on earth," whose "lessons and blessings last forever."

At the opening of her book, Red Elk quotes Vine Deloria Jr.: "I have been gradually led to believe that the old stories must be taken literally if at all possible, that deep secrets and a deeper awareness of the complexity of our universe was experienced by our ancestors, and that something of their beliefs and experiences can be ours once again."

The poet invites us to follow her into a realm that's as ancient as Earth, where old stories still have resonance. It's a journey that's well worth taking – powerful, vibrant and instructive.

Red Elk, an enrolled member of the Fort Peck Sioux Tribe, teaches at Fort Peck Community College, and is a former radio and TV talk-show host who worked as a technical advisor for several Hollywood film productions. Her first book, *Our Blood Remembers*, was published in 2011 and won the Best Poetry Award from Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers.

— Kristi Niemeyer

The Call of Everest, The History, Science, and Future of the World's Tallest Peak

By Conrad Anker and seven other chapter authors
Published 2013 by National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C.
\$35 hardcover

In 1963, The National Geographic Society sponsored the first American team of climbers to successfully summit the world's highest peak, Mount Everest, rising 29,035 feet in the Himalayan Range – a feat that had been accomplished by only nine other climbers.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic event, Bozeman climber Conrad Anker organized and led the 2012 Legacy Expedition, which included experts in the fields of geology, climate change, human physiology and the culture of the indigenous peoples. In his foreward, member of the 1963 American expedition, Thomas Hornbein writes, "Everest is being loved to death."

Expeditions were largely funded by nations until the 1990s, when the area was opened up to professional guiding companies. Annually, trekking guides lead hundreds of people to the summit every season, strung out and clipped to fixed ropes like a conga line.

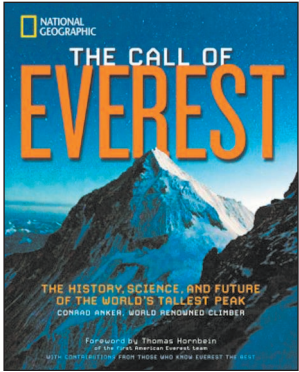
To some seasoned climbers, the spirituality of the experience seems lost to the commercialism of trophy collectors. However, in spite of sophisticated gear, well-worn routes and experienced guides, the mountain is still a place of incredible danger that claims lives on a regular basis.

"Everest will always be a focal point of human attention because it is the highest point on our planet, and as such it retains tremendous drawing power," writes Anker. "While the cognoscenti in climbing circles no longer respect its ascent, it still has an amazing allure for the nonclimber."

The book includes spectacular photographs, several route maps and inspired writings by people whose lives have been affected by the Everest experience.

Anker is world-renowned for his mountaineering skills and achievements. In 1999, he was the first to locate the remains of George Mallory, a British climber who died on Everest in 1924. He serves on several boards and is vice president of the Alex Lowe Charitable Foundation, which honors his friend and fellow Bozeman alpinist, who died in an avalanche in the Tibetan Himalayas.

— Judy Shafter



Songs of Willow Frost

By Jamie Ford
Published September 2013 by Ballantine Books, New York, NY
\$26 hardcover

William Eng, a 12-year-old Chinese American, remembers his mother vividly, even though he has lived at Seattle's Sacred Heart Orphanage since he was seven. When treated to a film with the other boys, he's certain the captivating actress on screen, Willow Frost, is Liu Song, his beloved Ah-ma, who disappeared from his life five years before.

Great Falls author Jamie Ford returns to the turf of his first novel, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, portraying Seattle during the Great Depression, a landscape of "shantytowns, billboards calling for strikes and protests, and missionary kitchens in between, handing out free bread to bearded skeletons."

As the story unfolds, Ford's characters live in two worlds: Chinatown of the 1920s where a young woman is abused by her stepfather and bears his child, and Seattle of the 1930s, where films and theatre are the only reprieve from a desperate, impoverished reality.

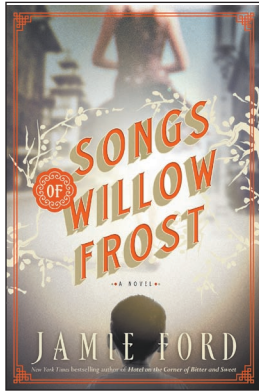
William's life at the orphanage is also harsh, but at least he has food, an education and two friends – an Indian boy and a blind girl. The nuns remind them daily that their fates could be much worse on the streets of Seattle, but still William escapes to seek his mother and unravel the mystery of her disappearance.

Willow tells William her story, how the daughter of a Cantonese opera singer, with a "thunderous contralto," worked as a "song plugger," earning a nickel for every piece of sheet music sold at the music store where she worked. When William was born, she struggled to support him in a community that already looked askance at single women – let alone musicians with illegitimate children.

Ford portrays a gritty city, where only the rich are immune from poverty, and where gender, race and handicaps are immutable liabilities. His story is most vibrant when he evokes Willow's youth, the color and texture of Chinatown, and the life of a vulnerable street singer.

Ivan Doig calls Ford's sophomore novel "another rich tapestry of history and family drama." The author is the son of a Chinese American father and grew up in Seattle. His first novel won the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature.

— Kristi Niemeyer



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Send us book ideas

Two Helena publishing companies welcome book ideas.

Farcountry Press invites writers, photographers and illustrators to submit their book ideas for consideration.

Farcountry publishes award-winning books on regional popular history, natural history and national parks for a general audience and for children.

The company also publishes color photography books on regions, states, cities and national parks, but generally does not publish poetry or fiction.

Please send book proposals to: Acquisitions, PO Box 5630, Helena, MT 59604. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or your materials will not be returned, and do not send original art or photographs. For more information, visit www.farcountrypress.com.

Riverbend Publishing also welcomes book proposals about Montana and the West. The company publishes award-winning books on regional history, natural history, photography and Glacier and Yellowstone national parks, plus cookbooks and fiction.

Send proposals to Editor, Riverbend Publishing, PO Box 5833, Helena, MT 59604. Visit www.riverbendpublishing.com for more information about the company.